

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A space-dividing wall panel assembly comprising:

an open frame defined by a pair of upright and laterally-spaced vertically elongate support members, and a plurality of vertically spaced and discrete cross members extending laterally between said support members and rigidly connecting said support members to one another;

a pair of cover members disposed in opposed relation with one another so as to overlie open areas of said frame between said support members, said cover members defining vertical side surfaces of said wall panel assembly;

an elongate top cap positioned longitudinally along an upper one of said cross members and extending along a substantial portion of the longitudinal extent of said upper cross member, said top cap having an upper portion which defines therein a longitudinally extending and outwardly opening groove and a lower portion which projects downwardly between upper edges of the opposed cover members for removable securing to said upper cross member, said lower portion defining first and second flanges which project outwardly towards opposite sides of said panel assembly;

a mounting member engaging said lower portion of said top cap and including a pair of separate clamps disposed in opposed relation with one another and clampingly engaging said upper cross member from opposite outwardly facing sides thereof, said clamps defining respective channels which open inwardly and toward one another and in which said first and second flanges are engaged; and

a bracket slidably engaged within said groove of said top cap.

2. (Original) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein said groove is T-shaped in transverse cross section.

3. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein an upper end of said bracket is engaged within said groove and said bracket has a lower end in supportive engagement with a lower one of said cross members, said bracket overlying a portion of said vertical side surface of a respective cover member and mounting thereon a furniture component, and said vertical side surfaces define respective outer side surfaces of said wall panel assembly.

4-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The wall panel assembly of Claim 5-1 wherein an elongate fastener extends through each said clamp and is adjustable to move said clamps toward one another to fixedly secure said top cap to said upper cross member, and away from one another to release said top cap from said upper cross member.

7. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein said upper portion of said top cap defines a generally hollow interior, and said lower portion projects downwardly from a bottom wall of said upper portion for engagement with said upper cross member.

8. (Original) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 further including a furniture component mounted on said bracket.

9. (Original) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein said bracket is an upper bracket and said panel

assembly further includes a lower elongate mounting rail secured to said panel assembly along a lower edge thereof and defining a longitudinally extending and sidewardly opening groove therein, a lower bracket slidably engaged within said groove of said mounting rail, and a connector post having an upper end secured to said upper bracket and a lower end connected to said lower bracket for mounting a return wall in transverse relation to said wall panel assembly.

10. (Currently Amended) In a wall panel arrangement having a frame defined by a plurality of upright and laterally spaced posts which are interconnected to one another by transversely extending and discrete frame members which are vertically spaced-apart from one another, said wall panel arrangement further including a plurality of cover members mounted on said frame between adjacent pairs of said posts and defining vertically oriented side surfaces, and an elongate top cap extending along an upper longitudinal edge of said frame, comprising the improvement wherein said top cap is removably mounted to an upper one of said frame members by a mounting member which engages a lower portion of said top cap and clampingly engages said upper frame member from opposite sides thereof, said mounting member also engaging a lower surface of said upper frame member, said top cap defining a longitudinal groove therein which opens upwardly, and a hanger having an upper end slidably engaged within said groove of said top cap and being suspendingly supported therefrom, said hanger overlying an outer surface of one of said cover members and mounting a furniture component thereon.

11. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 10 wherein said groove of said top cap has an inverted T-shaped cross section and opens upwardly through an uppermost wall of said top cap.

12. (Original) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 11 wherein said lower portion of said top cap defines a pair of mounting flanges which engage within respective channels defined within said mounting member.

13. (Currently Amended) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 10 wherein said mounting member includes a pair of clamps disposed in opposed relation with one another, each said clamp having a lower portion including an upright wall part which overlies an upright side wall of said upper frame member and a lower flange which projects inwardly and horizontally from a lower edge of said wall part and engages a lower surface of said upper frame member, and an upper portion defining an inwardly opening and horizontally extending recess in which said lower portion of said top cap engages, said clamps being adjustable relative to one another in a first direction wherein said clamps are movable toward one another and into engagement with said top cap, and a second direction wherein said clamps are movable away from one another so as to disengage from said top cap and permit removal of same.

14. (Original) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 10 wherein said top cap has an upper portion defining said groove therein, said upper portion includes a wall structure which defines a hollow interior, and said lower portion includes a pair of mounting flanges which project downwardly from a bottom wall of said upper portion and engage within respective channels defined within said mounting member.

15-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein said mounting member is a separate and distinct component from said top cap.

19. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 10 wherein said mounting member is a separate and distinct component from said top cap.

20. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 8 wherein said furniture component is an overhead storage unit.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) An upright space-dividing wall panel assembly comprising a pair of horizontally spaced, elongate and generally vertically oriented supports and an elongate and generally horizontally oriented rail member extending between said supports, a pair of generally vertically oriented and planar side surfaces on respective oppositely facing sides of said panel assembly, an elongate and rigid one-piece top cap which is generally horizontally oriented and positioned above and extending along a substantial portion of said rail member, a mounting structure clampingly engaging opposite sides of both said top cap and said rail member to fixedly secure said top cap thereto, said mounting structure being defined by a pair of opposed and generally C-shaped clamps which overlie opposite sides of said rail member, said top cap having an uppermost wall defining therein an elongate and continuous groove which opens upwardly through said uppermost wall for accommodating therein a mounting element which projects downwardly into said groove and is associated with a furniture component mounted on said panel assembly, said groove transferring at least a portion of an external downward load associated with the furniture component from said top cap to said rail member.

23. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 22 wherein one of said top cap and said mounting structure defines a recess therein and the other of said top

cap and said mounting structure defines a flange thereon which projects into said recess to secure said top cap to said mounting structure.

24. (Currently Amended) The wall panel assembly of Claim 22 wherein said C-shaped clamps said mounting structure is defined by a pair of opposed and generally C-shaped clamps which respectively engage and overlie opposite sides of said rail member and have respective upper portions which interlock with a lower portion of said top cap, and said clamps being are adjustably fastened to one another to allow same to move toward one another into clamping engagement with said top cap and said rail member, and away from one another to permit release of said clamps from said top cap and said rail member and allow removal of said top cap from said panel assembly.

25. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 24 wherein said lower portion of said top cap defines thereon a pair of horizontally sidewardly projecting cantilevered flanges which engage within inwardly opening and horizontally-oriented recesses defined in the respective upper portions of said clamps.

26. (Currently Amended) The wall panel assembly of Claim 22 wherein said mounting structure includes a plurality of discrete clamps each defined by two detachable, separate clamp members disposed in opposed relation with one another, said clamps being separate components from said top cap and being spaced longitudinally from one another along said rail member.

27. (Currently Amended) A space-dividing wall panel arrangement comprising a rigid open frame defined by a plurality of laterally-spaced uprights having lower ends disposed in supportive engagement with a horizontal support surface and a plurality of vertically-spaced supports

extending transversely between and rigidly interconnecting said uprights, a pair of covers disposed on opposite open sides of said frame and defining respective generally vertically oriented side surfaces of said panel arrangement, a rigid and elongate top cap supported on an upper one of said supports and extending along a substantial portion thereof, said top cap defining therein an upwardly-opening, elongate and continuous channel for mounting therein a hanger associated with a furniture accessory positioned for supportive engagement with said panel arrangement, and a plurality of discrete brackets spaced-apart longitudinally along said panel arrangement, each said bracket being defined by a pair of clamps which are detachable from one another and disposed in opposed relation with one another on opposite sides of said upper support and which clampingly and rigidly secure said top cap to said upper support to permit external loads, such as those associated with furniture accessories, to be transferred from said top cap to said upper support.

28. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 27 wherein said channel is defined entirely by said top cap.

29. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 27 wherein said uprights and said supports are rigid members constructed of metal.

30. (Currently Amended) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 27 wherein ~~each said bracket is defined by a pair of identical said clamps disposed in opposed relation and defining each said bracket are identical and are adjustably fastened to one another so as to permit said clamps to move toward and away from one another, each said clamp having a lower C-shaped portion which overlies an upright side wall of said upper support and an upper portion fixed to the respective lower portion and defining therein a sidewardly and~~

inwardly opening channel, said top cap having an upper portion defining said continuous channel therein and a lower portion mounting thereon a pair of sidewardly projecting and cantilevered flanges which respectively engage within said channels of said clamps.

31. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 30 wherein said flanges of said top cap extend along substantially the entire longitudinal extent thereof.

32. (Currently Amended) A space-dividing wall panel arrangement including a plurality of sidewardly spaced and vertically oriented support posts, each adjacent pair of said posts being interconnected to one another by a plurality of horizontally oriented, vertically spaced and discrete cross members so as to define an open frame, a pair of oppositely facing and vertically oriented panels supported on said frame and defining respective opposite sides of said panel arrangement, a top cap extending along and supported by an upper one of said cross members, said top cap being secured to said upper cross member by a plurality of clamping members which are spaced-apart longitudinally along said panel arrangement, each said clamping member being of two-piece construction defined by a pair of adjustably fastened clamps which are detachable from one another and are disposed on respective opposite sides of said upper cross member, said top cap defining an elongate mounting element spaced downwardly from said groove which engages with upper portions of the respective pairs of opposed clamps to secure said top cap thereto, said top cap defining therein a groove which extends continuously along an upper extent of said panel arrangement and which seats therein an upper end portion of a hanger which supports an office furniture accessory to mount same in a suspended manner on said panel arrangement at a selected location therealong, said hanger having a lower end portion

disposed in direct load-bearing engagement with a lower one of said cross members.

33-34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 32 wherein said groove opens upwardly and is defined solely by said top cap.

36. (Currently Amended) A space-dividing wall panel assembly comprising an open frame defined by a pair of vertically oriented uprights fixed to one another by at least one horizontally oriented cross rail which extends transversely between said uprights, a pair of opposed side covers overlying said frame on opposite sides thereof, an elongate top cap positioned above said cross rail and secured thereto by a plurality of discrete clamps which are separate and distinct components from said top cap and are spaced longitudinally along said cross rail, said top cap defining an elongate channel therein for accommodating a mounting element associated with a furniture component supported on said panel assembly, said clamps being releasably engaged with said top cap and said cross rail to allow removal of said top cap from said panel assembly, each said clamp being defined by a pair of opposed and discrete brackets which are adjustably fastened to one another and sandwich therebetween both said cross rail and a lower portion of said top cap, and said top cap having a width dimension which is greater than a width of said frame such that said top cap spans a width of said panel assembly as defined between said opposed side covers.

37-38 (Cancelled).

39. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 36 wherein said mounting element is an upper mounting element, and said assembly further includes a lower mounting

element fixed to a lower portion of said panel assembly and an elongate and upright connector post having an upper end portion secured to said upper mounting element and a lower end portion secured to said lower mounting element, and a return wall fixed to said connector post so as to extend in transverse relation to one of said side covers.

40. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 36 wherein said mounting element supports an overhead storage unit which overlies an exterior portion of one of said side covers.

41. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 1 wherein said bracket is slidably movable longitudinally along said panel assembly.

42. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 10 wherein said top cap extends along a substantial portion of the longitudinal extent of said upper frame member.

43. (Previously Presented) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 32, wherein said hanger projects downwardly over an outwardly-facing side surface of one of said panels, and said lower end portion of said hanger is positioned adjacent and disposed in direct load-bearing relationship with said lower cross member.

44. (Previously Presented) The wall panel assembly of Claim 22 wherein said groove is generally centrally located between two parallel and longitudinally extending edges of said uppermost wall, said groove having a transverse cross section defined by a lower horizontally oriented portion and an upper vertically oriented portion which defines a mouth of said groove and which has a transverse width substantially less than a transverse width of said lower portion, said upper portion projecting upwardly from a center of said lower

portion in generally perpendicular relation therewith to provide said groove with an inverted T-shaped cross section.

45. (Previously Presented) A space-dividing wall panel assembly comprising a frame defined by a pair of upright and laterally spaced vertically elongate support members and a cross member extending laterally between said support members, a pair of generally vertically oriented side surfaces on respective oppositely facing sides of said panel assembly, an elongate top cap positioned longitudinally along said cross member, said top cap defining therein a longitudinally extending and outwardly opening groove, a pair of opposed clamps engaging a lower portion of said top cap and clampingly engaging said cross member from oppositely facing sides thereof, an elongate fastener extending through the respective clamps and being adjustable to move said clamps toward one another to fixedly secure said top cap to said cross member, and away from one another to release said top cap from said cross member.

46. (New) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 32 wherein one of said panels comprises a pair of panels supported on one side of said frame, each said panel being defined by spaced-apart and generally upright opposite edges and upper and lower edges extending laterally between said opposite edges, said upper end portion of said hanger has a hook shape and is slidably engaged within said groove and said lower end portion defines a flange thereon, said flange projecting inwardly between said lower edge of an upper one of said panels and said upper edge of a lower one of said panels and supportingly engaging said lower one of said cross members.

47. (New) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 46 wherein said flange is a first flange, and said hanger further includes a sidewardly projecting tab which engages within a recess defined in a rear wall of said accessory, and a second

flange which projects outwardly and is disposed in supportive engagement with a lower wall of said accessory.

48. (New) The wall panel arrangement of Claim 47 wherein said accessory is an overhead storage unit.